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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/615,976	07/10/2003	Toru Futami	240108US3	3393
22850	7590	06/20/2006	EXAMINER	
OBLON, SPIVAK, MCCLELLAND, MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C. 1940 DUKE STREET ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314			LEUNG, JENNIFER A	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			1764	

DATE MAILED: 06/20/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/615,976

Applicant(s)

FUTAMI ET AL.

Examiner

Jennifer A. Leung

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 1 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-34 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☒ Claim(s) 1-34 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: ____.

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:
 - I. Claims 1-24, drawn to a fine channel device, classified in class 422, subclass 129.
 - II. Claims 25-34, drawn to various chemically operating methods, classified in various classes and subclasses (see below).

The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

Inventions II and I, respectively, are related as process and apparatus for its practice. The inventions are distinct if it can be shown that either: (1) the process as claimed can be practiced by another and materially different apparatus or by hand, or (2) the apparatus as claimed can be used to practice another and materially different process. (MPEP § 806.05(e)). In this case, the methods as claimed can be practiced by another and materially different apparatus. For instance, the method of causing a chemical reaction of at least two kinds of fluids, contacting through partition walls in a fine channel, could be conducted using a membrane reactor.

Because these inventions are independent or distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art in view of their different classification, different field of search (see MPEP § 808.02), and/or recognized divergent subject matter, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

2. If Applicant elects Group II, restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:

- IIA. Claims 25 and 26, drawn to a chemically operating method causing mixing, broadly classified in various classes and subclasses, including class 366, subclass

341.

- IIB. Claim 27, drawn to a chemically operating method causing a chemical reaction, broadly classified in various classes and subclasses, including class 423, class 585, and class 518.
- IIC. Claim 28, drawn to a chemically operating method causing extraction, broadly classified in various classes and subclasses, including class 423, subclass 658.5, and class 210, subclass 634.
- IID. Claims 29-31, drawn to a chemically operating method causing separation, broadly classified in various classes, including class 210, subclass 767.
- IIE. Claims 32 and 33, drawn to a chemically operating method supplying energy, broadly classified in various classes, including class 204, subclass 157.15.
- IIF. Claim 34, drawn to a chemically operating method with two chemically operating methods, classified in various classes, including a combination of the classes and subclasses listed above for groups IIA through IIE.

The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

Inventions IIA - IIE are each unrelated to the other. Inventions are unrelated if it can be shown that they are not disclosed as capable of use together and they have different modes of operation, different functions, or different effects (MPEP §806.04, 808.01). In the instant case, the different inventions are not connected in design, operation, or effect and therefore the facts relied on for this conclusion are in essence the reasons for insisting upon restriction.

Inventions IIA - IIE are each unrelated to Invention IIF. Inventions are unrelated if it can be shown that they are not disclosed as capable of use together and they have different modes of

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operation, different functions, or different effects (MPEP § 806.04, 808.01). In the instant case, the different inventions are not connected in design, operation, or effect and therefore the facts relied on for this conclusion are in essence the reasons for insisting upon restriction. Because Invention IIE only requires two chemically operating methods, any remaining unselected chemically operating method would be unrelated to Invention IIE.

Because these inventions are independent or distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art in view of their different classification, different field of search (see MPEP § 808.02), and/or recognized divergent subject matter, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

3. Applicant is advised that the reply to this requirement to be complete must include (i) an election of a species or invention to be examined even though the requirement be traversed (37 CFR 1.143) and (ii) identification of the claims encompassing the elected invention.

4. The election of an invention or species may be made with or without traverse. To reserve a right to petition, the election must be made with traverse. If the reply does not distinctly and specifically point out supposed errors in the restriction requirement, the election shall be treated as an election without traverse.

5. Should applicant traverse on the ground that the inventions or species are not patentably distinct, applicant should submit evidence or identify such evidence now of record showing the inventions or species to be obvious variants or clearly admit on the record that this is the case. In either instance, if the examiner finds one of the inventions unpatentable over the prior art, the evidence or admission may be used in a rejection under 35 U.S.C.103(a) of the other invention.

6. Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the

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inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a request under 37 CFR 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR 1.17(i).

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jennifer A. Leung whose telephone number is (571) 272-1449. The examiner can normally be reached on 9:30 am - 5:30 pm Monday through Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Glenn A. Caldarola can be reached on (571) 272-1444. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Jennifer A. Leung
June 8, 2006 


ALEXA DOROSHENK NECKEL
PRIMARY EXAMINER